

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

14 December 1971

Mr. Paul L. Hoch
1735 Highland Place
Berkeley, California 94709

Dear Mr. Hoch:

With regard to your letter of November 24th asking for a review of our denial to certain items requested in your letter of November 1st, I would like first to make a couple of general observations.

We are highly in favor of declassifying everything possible in connection with the records of the Warren Commission. The most convincing motive for us to do this is our firm belief that all the information so declassified would merely go to support the conclusions of the Warren Commission and dispel any possible confusion or suspicion that the continued classification may have raised. We have declassified a considerable amount of material as you know and hope as time goes by to declassify more as there is every inducement for us to do so. But, balanced against that is our duty to protect classified information and intelligence sources and methods from unauthorized disclosure. This is often a difficult decision but in the light of all the circumstances certain items will remain classified for the time being. Their content, however, does not materially affect the Commission findings.

In connection with the photograph of the unidentified man, we too have heard that claims are made of identification, but we have not been satisfied that this is so. Therefore, so far as we

are concerned, the man is still unidentified. Regardless of this, your speculation, or as you call it your "tentative interpretation," as to why it came to be associated with Oswald is accurate so far as we know; that is, in the intense effort to produce everything that might possibly have some bearing on the assassination of President Kennedy, we furnished the photograph to the FBI on November 22, 1963. It was thought at the time that he might have had some association with Oswald, since both were in the area around the same time. As it turned out, the photograph was taken on October 4, 1963, one day after Oswald left Mexico and returned to Dallas (Commission Report, p. 323). Oswald was not under investigation by us when he was in Mexico, and we did not learn about his departure date and many other details until the exhaustive FBI investigation following the assassination.

At no time did we have any indication of an association between Oswald and the unidentified man other than the above-mentioned speculation. Thus, we do not see what purpose is served by further consideration of the photographs in question, and there is no reason to infer from this that there was any reason whatsoever for any association between Oswald and this man. Contrary to the conclusion in your letter of November 1st, there is still reason not to release the entire photograph.

As to your request for item 3, the memorandum of July 23, 1964 from Mr. Helms, we stated in our letter of November 15th that this has no substantive information bearing on the Warren Commission findings and report and is still classified. If, as you request, we were to release it with any necessary deletions, you would have only the address and signature, which would seem to serve no purpose.

Since you are obviously a student of the whole Warren Commission problem, I am enclosing for your files an article from The New York Times of 22 November 1971, which you may not have seen previously.

Sincerely,



L. K. White

Executive Director-Comptroller

Enclosure